

“In a conversation about the war a few weeks ago, I was asked, ‘Where are the heroes?’ In prior wars, everyone knew the heroes. Well, there are a great many, and they’re doing exactly what needs to be done to keep our country safe and to preserve freedom for our children and theirs. I think we could probably all do a better job -- media and the military alike -- in telling their stories.”

– Secretary Donald Rumsfeld,
Senate Hearing, February 7, 2006

Heroes in the Global War on Terror come from all parts of the country and every state. These are the stories of just a few of our nation’s sons and daughters, completing history’s great task on behalf of human freedom...

50 heroes from 50 states.



ALABAMA



AIR FORCE CHIEF MASTER SGT. KEVIN LYNN

Chief Master Sgt. Lynn helped establish the first military police academy in Iraq during his deployment from Feb. 28 to July 23, 2004. Chief Lynn and 13 Air Force security forces members renovated a bombed-out former Republican Guard base in Taji, Iraq, into the site for the new police academy. Lynn served as commandant of the school. Starting from scratch, they developed and implemented a course for the academy in just nine days. In all, Lynn and his team are credited with having graduated more than 500 military policemen and 40 military police instructors.

For his work, Lynn received the Bronze Star Medal on Dec. 14, 2004.

ARIZONA



ARIZONA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SGT. 1ST CLASS KEVIN CARPENTER

Then-Staff Sgt. Carpenter and his squad were in a convoy performing reconnaissance and surveillance patrols on Oct. 6, 2005, when the lead vehicle was hit. Carpenter sectioned off the area around the damaged vehicle, which had veered off the road and crashed into a building. Unable to reach his headquarters on the vehicle's radio, Carpenter called in the situation using his cell phone. He directed the pickup and transport of the injured soldiers, and also led his team to extract the wounded and dead from the disabled vehicle. His immediate response saved the lives of two severely injured soldiers. For his actions and leadership, Carpenter received the Bronze Star Medal in August 2006.



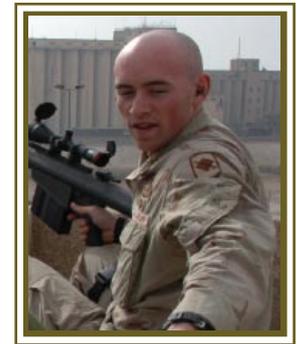
ALASKA



MARINE CORPS SGT. JARRED L. ADAMS

Sgt. Adams and his group were operating along the Iraq-Syria border on January 6, 2005. As they were traveling toward a roadway in the city of Husaybah dubbed the "intersection of death," insurgents attacked, causing Adams' Humvee to crash and become stuck. Once the Humvee was dislodged, Adams and his team were driving around to locate another vehicle when a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) hit Adams' vehicle, killing one Marine and wounding others, including Adams. He and his team moved to a safer location, but Adams realized the fallen Marine was still inside the burning vehicle. He ran through the line of fire, retrieved the Marine, and carried him back to safety. Adams was awarded the Silver Star Medal on April 17, 2006.

ARKANSAS



ARKANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD 1ST LT. MICHAEL MCCARTY

First Lt. McCarty's platoon was patrolling in the Adhamiyah district of Baghdad on Nov. 20, 2004, when a group of insurgents attacked. As the enemy fighters inflicted a massive assault on the 26-man team, McCarty directed a counterattack. At one point, McCarty charged and destroyed an enemy machine-gun team without any support. In all, his team stopped an enemy three-man machine-gun team and a force of about 75 insurgents. McCarty's actions prevented the capture of an Iraqi police station. On Feb. 4, 2006, McCarty was awarded the Silver Star Medal. He was previously awarded the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Commendation Medal with Valor.



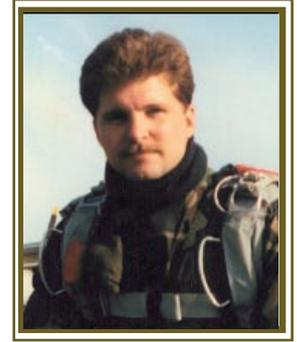
CALIFORNIA



NAVY PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS MATTHEW G. AXELSON

Navy SEAL Petty Officers Axelson and Dietz (see below) were part of a four-man reconnaissance team sent on a mission on June 28, 2005, to find a key Taliban leader in the rough and dangerous terrain east of Asadabad, Afghanistan. Taliban backers spotted the team, and alerted terrorist fighters of their presence. A deadly firefight ensued between the four SEALs and an enemy force of at least 30 fighters. The SEALs radioed for reinforcements; however, the MH-47 Chinook helicopter that was sent in as support was shot down, killing all 16 men aboard. Axelson was severely wounded, but continued to fight and hold his ground. The enemy force eventually killed Axelson. He was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross on Sept. 13, 2006.

CONNECTICUT



AIR FORCE TECH. SGT. JOHN A. CHAPMAN

Tech. Sgt. Chapman and his team were on a reconnaissance mission in northeastern Afghanistan on March 4, 2002. The team's Chinook came under heavy enemy fire, forcing it to crash land. After landing, Chapman called in close-air support to cover the exposed team and to help search for a Navy SEAL team member who had fallen out of the helicopter. Searching for the missing SEAL, he killed two enemies, then came upon a dug-in machine gun nest. Enemies fired on the rescue team from three sides; Chapman fired back at close range until multiple wounds took his life. For his actions at "Robert's Ridge," Chapman was posthumously awarded the Air Force Cross on Jan. 10, 2003. A U.S. Navy cargo ship was named in honor of him on April 8, 2005.



COLORADO



NAVY PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS DANNY P. DIETZ

Navy SEAL Petty Officer Dietz was sent on a mission to kill or capture the enemy militia leader Ahmad Shah, aka Mullah Ismail. After the terrorists found the team, Dietz helped others keep the large enemy force at bay. Dietz was also severely wounded in the firefight, but also continued to hold his ground, giving one of the other SEALs the chance to escape. The other SEAL was able to evade the Taliban fighters and was recovered by U.S. forces a few days later. Dietz died in the firefight.

Dietz was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross on Sept. 13, 2006.

DELAWARE



DELAWARE AIR NATIONAL GUARD MAJ. PAT HOUTMAN

Maj. Pat Houtman and his crew were flying over Afghanistan on a mission in November 2004 when they came under intense enemy fire. The C-130 transport plane was holding 10 passengers and a full cargo load. Houtman and his team immediately took evasive action to get the C-130 transport plane out of danger and to safety. Houtman was flying the plane low, which is necessary for many of the missions in Afghanistan – because of the rugged terrain, it can be difficult to locate soldiers on re-supply missions. The details of Houtman's and his team's actions remain largely classified for security purposes. On Sept. 10, 2006, Houtman was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the nation's oldest military aviation award.

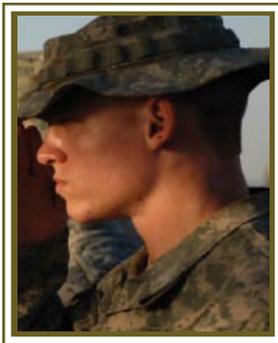


FLORIDA



ARMY SGT. 1ST CLASS PAUL R. SMITH

Sgt. 1st Class Smith and his team were constructing a prisoner-of-war holding area near Baghdad International Airport on April 4, 2003, when a large enemy force attacked. Smith organized a hasty defense. Fearing their defenses would be overrun, Smith moved through intense enemy fire to a machine gun mounted atop a damaged vehicle. He maintained his exposed position, allowing for his unit to regroup and form a counter-attack. Numerous enemy soldiers were killed, and his unit was able to withdraw a number of injured soldiers. Smith's heroic actions helped defeat the enemy force, but also claimed his life. On April 4, 2005, Smith was posthumously awarded the first, and so far the only, Medal of Honor in the Global War on Terror.



GEORGIA

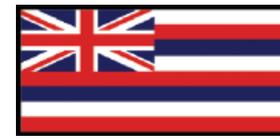


GEORGIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PFC. JUSTIN HAIR

Pfc. Hair and his unit were working a security checkpoint near Radwiniyah, Iraq, on June 13, 2005, when a suicide bomber attempted to pass through in a vehicle rigged with explosives. Assessing the dangerous situation, Hair advanced on the enemy and killed him before the insurgent was able to detonate the device. As a result, he was injured in the attack. Hair's quick thinking and actions likely saved several lives. Hair was the first to engage and eliminate an enemy in combat for the 48th Brigade Combat Team in 60 years.

For his actions, Hair received the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and the Army Commendation Medal on Aug. 20, 2005.

HAWAII



ARMY SPECIAL FORCES CAPT. JASON L. AMERINE

Capt. Amerine and his team were deployed to Afghanistan to root out the Taliban and to help stabilize the country. In mid-November 2001, Amerine's small team defended Tarin Kot, a city that the Taliban tried to take back from Coalition forces. With the help of Afghan freedom fighters led by Hamid Karzai, they engaged in several hours of close combat with the enemies. Amerine's team also helped train, secure, and organize friendly Afghan forces. On Dec. 5, an errant bomb landed close to the team, killing three U.S. soldiers and wounding several others, including Amerine. On Jan. 15, 2002, Amerine was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. Amerine was chosen as one of the faces included in the U.S. Army's "America's Army" video game.

IDAHO



FORMER MARINE RESERVE STAFF SGT. LUKE MILLER

Then-Sgt. Luke Miller's tank was participating in an insurgent sweep near Karbala, Iraq, from May 8-14, 2005. On May 8, a roadside bomb went off under a nearby tank, severely damaging it. Miller rushed from his tank to help those trapped inside the wrecked tank. As his team provided protective fire, Miller and another Marine pulled a wounded Marine from the tank. Miller then pulled out another injured Marine, slung him over his shoulder, and dodged insurgent fire as delivered him to a waiting helicopter for evacuation. He then returned to his team to rejoin the fight. On Nov. 10, 2005, Miller received the Military Vanguard Award, bestowed annually upon one member of each branch of the military. On Nov. 14, 2005, Miller was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.



ILLINOIS



ARMY RESERVE SPC. JEREMY CHURCH

Spc. Church was on an emergency fuel run on April 9, 2004, when more than 150 insurgents ambushed his convoy near Abu Ghraib, Iraq. Church began firing back at the enemies while steering his Humvee through the kill zone. When a soldier in his Humvee was struck in the head by insurgent fire, Church administered first aid as he drove. Even after an improvised explosive device (IED) blew out one of the tires, he continued driving. After delivering the wounded soldier to medics in a secured perimeter, Church rallied nearby soldiers to get back to the fight. They made their way back to help 10 trapped soldiers and contractors. In February 2005, Church became the first Army Reserve soldier to receive the Silver Star Medal in the Global War on Terror.

IOWA



MARINE CORPS SGT. MAJ. BRADLEY A. KASAL

Then-1st Sgt. Kasal was assisting a platoon in Fallujah on Nov. 13, 2004, when heavy gunfire broke out in an Iraqi home known as the "House of Hell." Marines quickly began exiting the building as Kasal rushed in to assess the situation. Kasal was hit repeatedly as he grabbed a wounded Marine stranded in the line of fire. He then gave his medical supplies to the other Marine instead of dividing the limited materials. The insurgents threw a hand grenade close to the Marines to force them to come out from under cover. Kasal used his own severely injured body to protect the other Marine from shrapnel. Despite losing about 60 percent of his blood from more than 47 wounds, Kasal survived. On March 23, 2006, Kasal was awarded the Navy Cross.



INDIANA



ARMY CPL. NATHANIEL S. BAUGHMAN

Cpl. Baughman was deployed with the 187th Infantry Regiment in September 2005 for a year-long deployment to Iraq. On July 17, 2006, Baughman's Humvee was part of a convoy participating in patrol operations in the city of Bayji, Iraq. His Humvee was hit by a RPG, severely injuring him. Later that day, Baughman died from his injuries.

For going beyond the call of duty and for giving his life for his fellow soldiers, on July 19, 2006, Baughman was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart.

KANSAS



NAVY RESERVE CAPTAIN MATTHEW C. GRATTON

While serving as the battalion surgeon for a Marine unit from January to September 2005 in the Al Anbar province of Iraq, Dr. Gratton was responsible for the health and well-being of 1,700 Marines, sailors and Iraqi soldiers. During his deployment, Gratton provided specialized medical care to more than 1,000 patients, and organized material and personnel support for more than 500 Iraqi army personnel. On May 7 alone, he supervised and treated 11 casualties injured in an IED attack in Haditha. In addition, Gratton provided trauma care to the battalion's 345 troops wounded in action, 150 of whom were in critical condition and had to be evacuated. On Aug. 28, 2006, Gratton received the Bronze Star Medal for his work.



KENTUCKY



KENTUCKY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SGT. LEIGH ANN HESTER

Sgt. Hester's squad was following a supply convoy on March 20, 2005, just south of Baghdad when insurgents ambushed the convoy. Her squad quickly moved into position, cutting off the enemy's escape route. Hester led her team directly into the line of fire into a flanking position, and then began an assault on a trench line. She and her squad leader cleared two trenches. When the attack was over, 27 insurgents were dead, six were wounded, and one was captured.

In June 2005, Hester was the first woman soldier since World War II to be awarded the Silver Star Medal.



LOUISIANA

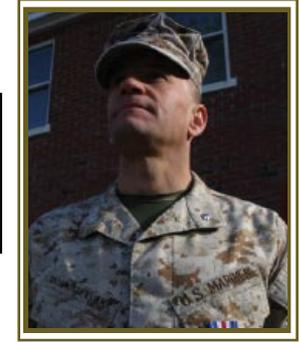


LOUISIANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SGT. SETH RANDELL TRAHAN

Disrupting the holiest day of the Shiite religious calendar, eight suicide bombers struck in Iraq in quick succession, killing numerous people on Feb. 19, 2005. Iraqi forces in Baghdad were struggling to handle the large bundle of attacks, and asked for Coalition assistance. As Trahan's team was responding to the Iraqi forces' call for help, he was killed by an IED. Trahan was assigned to the Army National Guard's 3d Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, out of Crowley, La.

Trahan had received 11 medals during his military enlistment; the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart were awarded posthumously.

MAINE



MARINE CORPS LT. COL. TODD S. DESGROSSEILLIERS

Lt. Col. Desgrosseilliers was the officer in charge of Task Force Bruno, which was operating in and around Fallujah, Iraq, from Dec. 12 to 23, 2004. He was leading a group of 60 to 100 men as they followed the main body of the battalion, sweeping the city. He received word on Dec. 12 that Marines were pinned down by enemy gunfire inside a building. With insurgents throwing down grenades from the second floor, Desgrosseilliers pressed on and helped the trapped Marines. His group continued similar operations in Fallujah for more than a week. On Dec. 23, he again led his battalion through a heavy gunfire battle against insurgent fighters. For his leadership and actions, Desgrosseilliers was awarded the Silver Star Medal on Jan. 23, 2006.

MARYLAND



ARMY SPECIAL FORCES MASTER SGT. SARUN SAR

Master Sgt. Sar and his 12-man special operations team were sent to search for Taliban fighters in the snowy mountains of eastern Afghanistan on March 5, 2005. As the team's helicopters attempted to land outside an area suspected of sheltering insurgents, the group began to receive heavy fire from the direction of the village. Sar was out front alone as his team was temporarily pinned down. He continued to take enemy fire as he waited for his team to catch up to him. When they did, Sar and the team medic went after an enemy hiding in a hut. Sar killed the insurgent after getting hit by the enemy's fire. His team cleared the area of enemy fighters and rounded up a large cache of enemy weapons. On Jan. 3, 2006, Sar received the Silver Star Medal.



MASSACHUSETTS



**FORMER MARINE CORPS
CAPT. JASON P. SCHAUBLE**

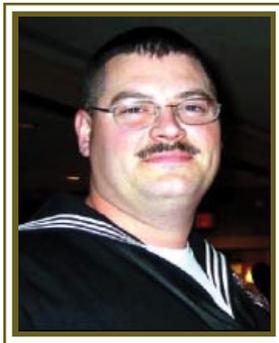
In the pre-assault planning for Fallujah and Hit in the fall of 2004, Capt. Schauble coordinated all artillery fire and sniper operations. During the seizures of both Iraqi cities, Schauble's team successfully engaged enemy targets. On Jan. 3, 2005, Schauble and his team were searching for a high-value target when they came under heavy enemy fire. Schauble ran into a farmhouse to recover a fallen Marine, drawing fire from insurgents inside. Despite being shot and wounded, Schauble shot two insurgents, allowing his Marines to counter-attack. On Sept. 11, 2006, Schauble was awarded the Silver Star for his efforts at the farmhouse, the Bronze Star with a combat "V" for valor for his actions from Oct. 11-16, 2004, and the Meritorious Service Medal for his work with a new training unit.

MINNESOTA



**ARMY RESERVE
STAFF SGT. JOSEPH P. BUHAIN**

Staff Sgt. Buhain, a respiratory therapist, was activated as a medic and served in two combat zones from May 2004 to July 2005. Buhain was first sent to Iraq to treat the wounded. He spent a few months there, treating Coalition soldiers and insurgents alike. Buhain was then sent to Afghanistan in September to be the medical noncommissioned officer in charge of the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team. During his time there, Buhain built from scratch a respiratory school for Afghan medical students and an ICU in a hospital in Kandahar. He also trained more than 350 medical students in CPR, and took part in more than 150 missions, several of which were high risk. For his efforts in both countries, Buhain was awarded the Bronze Star in March 10, 2005.



MICHIGAN



**NAVY
PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS ALAN P. DEMETER**

Petty Officer Demeter was assigned to a group of Marines near An Nasariyah, Iraq, when insurgents attacked his unit's command headquarters on March 26, 2003. Wounded by shrapnel and dodging heavy enemy fire, Demeter moved to another part of the compound where a group of Marines were pinned down. He proceeded over a wall to reach six wounded Marines and provided life-saving emergency treatment. After Demeter stabilized them, he directed and helped move the wounded to the compound's battle aid station. His actions led to the safe evacuation of 31 injured Marines.

Demeter was awarded the Bronze Star with Combat "V" on Feb. 23, 2004.

MISSISSIPPI



**NAVY
LT. BRYAN BOUDREAU**

Lt. Bryan Boudreaux was serving as a manager at the U.S. embassy in Baghdad on Jan. 29, 2005, when insurgents fired a missile at the embassy. Boudreaux threw himself over a soldier who had been knocked to the ground to protect him from the debris and smoke that began filling the room. Boudreaux then gave first aid to a major, saving his life and his arms from amputation. Afterward, Boudreaux re-entered the embassy, helping others to safety and performing first aid when necessary. The blast killed two people and wounded seven others. During his deployment, Boudreaux expertly managed \$18.6 billion that was appropriated by Congress to rebuild Iraq. For his service, Boudreaux received the Bronze Star Medal on Sept. 6, 2005.



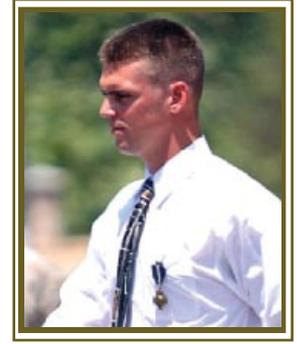
MISSOURI



MISSOURI AIR NATIONAL GUARD MASTER SGT. LETITIA WHITAKER

During her deployment at Kirkuk Air Base from March 28-July 10, 2003, Master Sgt. Whitaker helped establish the first air-control service in northern Iraq since 1990. The service supported about 4,800 combat actions, including covert operations, humanitarian airlifts and medical evacuations. She also supervised several covert flight operations using tactical radios and night vision goggles, and developed explosive-ordnance disposal procedures for the base. She co-authored airfield operating procedures for aero-medical evacuation of wounded coalition forces that resulted in the rapid evacuation of more than 86 critically wounded soldiers and airmen. In May 2006, Whitaker became the first woman in the Missouri Air National Guard's history to receive the Bronze Star Medal.

NEBRASKA



FORMER MARINE CORPS SGT. ROBERT J. MITCHELL, JR.

Then-Cpl. Mitchell was involved in the same fight during the battle of Fallujah on Nov. 13, 2004, as Sgt. Maj. Kasal (see Iowa). Several wounded Marines were trapped inside an Iraqi home known as the "House of Hell" with numerous insurgents waiting to ambush the incoming troops. Mitchell organized his men to assault the building, charged, and quickly took firing positions. Mitchell sped through the kill zone, getting hit as he went. He killed an enemy fighter with his combat knife, and called in support through a small, barred window. With information supplied from Mitchell, the Marines suppressed the insurgents' attack, and extracted the wounded Marines inside. Mitchell was one of the last to leave, despite being injured. On April 25, 2006, Mitchell was awarded the Navy Cross.



MONTANA



AIR FORCE AIRMAN 1ST CLASS CHARITY LEE TRUEBLOOD

Airman Trueblood was driving an up-armored Humvee providing security to a group that was moving supplies on Dec. 5, 2005, when her convoy was attacked near Balad Air Base in Iraq. A driver indicated over the radio that he had been hit. Under fire, Trueblood moved her truck between the enemy fire and the other vehicles, which were not up-armored. The injured man pulled to the side of the road because his truck caught on fire. Trueblood drove up to the injured man's vehicle, which was engulfed in flames. She performed first aid and helped to get him to a secure location for medical treatment.

Trueblood received the Bronze Star with Valor on Sept. 14, 2006.

NEVADA



ARMY SPC. IGNACIO RAMIREZ

Spc. Ramirez, a chemical specialist, was part of a brigade conducting operations around Ar Ramadi, Iraq, on Aug. 9, 2006. The city is the capital of Al Anbar province, where support for the Sunni insurgency is strong. Ramirez was driving a Humvee in a seven-vehicle convoy when a homemade roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle, killing him and two other soldiers.

For going above and beyond the call of duty and sacrificing his life for his fellow soldiers, on Sept. 7, 2006, Ramirez was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Badge, and the Honor of the Dragon, a unique award given to chemical specialists.



NEW HAMPSHIRE



FORMER ARMY RESERVE CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 KARL HANNAN

Warrant Officer Hannan was deployed to Tikrit, Iraq, from February 2004 to January 2005 to serve as a maintenance technician with a unit that supported heavy trucks. During his time there, Hannan designed and manufactured a clip-on armor plating kit to protect soldiers traveling in the trucks. The armor plating is the only type of its kind in Iraq, allowing it to be clipped on rather than bolted to the body of the vehicles, which prevents it from damaging the vehicles. At their peak, his team could up-armor 254 trucks a day. He also made engineering prints for other types of trucks and trained others how to weld, manufacture and read the blueprints for the armor. Hannan was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his work in January 2005.



NEW JERSEY



MARINE CORPS MAJ. FRANK DIORIO

On April 11, 2005, insurgents launched an attack against the Camp Gannon base in Husaybah, Iraq. As enemy fighters unleashed small-arms fire, grenades and vehicle-borne IEDs, then-Capt. Diorio controlled the situation for the base. His quick reactions and sound decisions enabled his company to fend off the insurgents, inflicting a high number of casualties on the enemy. After the attack, Diorio had improved defenses built to better protect from future attacks. He also led offensive operations that disrupted the enemy in Husaybah. In all, Diorio led his company in more than 275 engagements. On Jan. 31, 2006, Diorio was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for multiple actions taken from March 17 to Sept. 10, 2005.

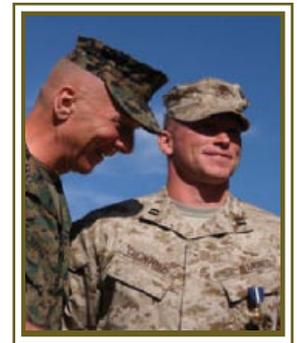
NEW MEXICO



AIR FORCE SENIOR AIRMAN JASON D. CUNNINGHAM

Airman Cunningham was a search-and-rescue medic on the same mission as Tech. Sgt. Chapman (see Connecticut) on March 4, 2002. The Chinook helicopter carrying the group was shot down, and although a hasty defense was formed, they suffered many casualties. Cunningham stayed in the burning Chinook to treat the wounds of the servicemen, and braved attacks to re-position the critically wounded men. Even after Cunningham was severely injured, he continued to direct movement and care of the wounded to another medic. His efforts saved 10 seriously injured Americans. For his actions at "Robert's Ridge," Cunningham was posthumously awarded the Air Force Cross on Sept. 13, 2002.

NEW YORK



MARINE CORPS CAPT. BRIAN R. CHONTOSH

Then-1st Lt. Chontosh was leading his platoon north toward Ad Diwaniyah in southern Iraq on March 25, 2003. Insurgents set up an ambush, and with Coalition tanks blocking the road ahead, Chontosh's group got caught directly in the line of fire. Chontosh had his driver position their vehicle to cut off an enemy machine gun firing on the platoon. He then ordered his driver to position the vehicle into the enemy trench. He exited the vehicle to begin clearing the trench. Chontosh single handedly cleared more than 200 meters of an enemy trench, using his own weapons and discarded enemy weapons, killing more than 20 insurgents and disabling others. Chontosh was awarded the Navy Cross Medal on March 12, 2004.



NORTH CAROLINA



MARINE CORPS
CAPT. ALFRED L. BUTLER IVT

Then-1st Lt. Butler and his team were conducting operations in Fallujah, Iraq, on Dec. 23, 2004, when insurgents ambushed his platoon. Butler raced to the attack where several men in a house were taking heavy automatic weapons fire on a stairwell. He evacuated the men from a house under intense fire, and then organized an assault force to confront the insurgents who were pinning down additional men on the second floor. Jumping roof to roof, Butler and his team cleared two buildings under fire to retrieve the other men. Butler shielded the bodies of fallen Marines when a grenade landed nearby, then threw two grenades into a room filled with enemies to help eliminate the threat. For his actions, Butler was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device on May 26, 2006.

OHIO



MARINE CORPS RESERVE
CPL. TODD CORBIN

Then-Lance Cpl. Corbin and his platoon responded to a call on May 7, 2005, to help block an insurgents' retreat in Haditha, Iraq. A vehicle laden with IEDs sped toward the convoy and blew up between two of the Humvees as enemy fighters began firing upon the group. Corbin repositioned his vehicle to block the fire from hitting the wounded. He radioed in the situation, and began directing a counter-attack. Corbin then ran back and forth several times through the line of fire recovering dead or wounded personnel, firing at the enemy, and loaded them into his Humvee. Once he had everyone loaded, he drove his damaged truck through the kill zone to deliver the casualties to the battle aid station. Corbin was awarded the Navy Cross on April 12, 2006.



NORTH DAKOTA

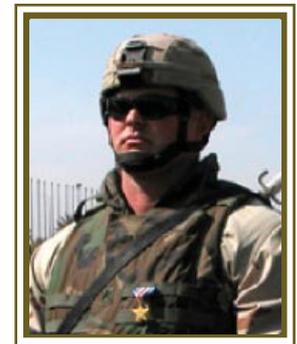


NORTH DAKOTA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
SGT. KEITH L. SMETTE

Sgt. Smette deployed to Iraq in the early stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom, in April 2003. Smette and his convoy were heading to Baghdad International Airport on Jan. 24, 2004, when his convoy was attacked by insurgents using an IED just south of Fallujah, Iraq. Smette, who was driving the vehicle, was instantly killed in the attack. He had volunteered to be deployed with his brother, Staff Sgt. Robert Smette, as a part of the 957th Engineer Company. Staff Sgt. Smette is still a member of the North Dakota Army National Guard.

Smette was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart and North Dakota Legion of Merit award on Jan. 24, 2004.

OKLAHOMA



ARMY
STAFF SGT. WILLIAM THOMAS PAYNE

Staff Sgt. Payne's battalion was finishing an operation on Haifa Street in Baghdad on Sept. 12, 2004, when a vehicle-borne IED exploded into the rear of a Bradley fighting vehicle. As the blast disabled the Bradley and trapped men inside, insurgents began firing down onto the street. Payne directed his squad into a position to provide cover fire while he and another soldier raced to help those stuck inside the damaged vehicle. Payne climbed atop the Bradley and helped two of the crewmen out of the turret. He reached inside the compartment and began pulling the trapped infantrymen out one by one. As the battle lulled, Payne and his soldiers loaded the injured up for evacuation. For his actions, Payne received the Silver Star Medal on Feb. 27, 2005.



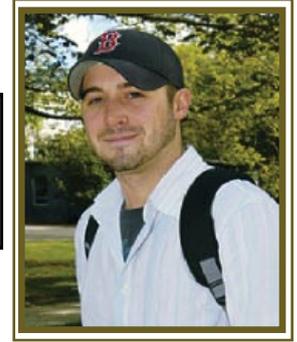
OREGON



OREGON ARMY NATIONAL GUARD STAFF SGT. MATTHEW W. ZEDWICK

Then-Sgt. Zedwick was part of a patrol north of Taji in June 2004 when a vehicle-borne IED hit and destroyed his Humvee, killing his gunner and wounding him and his commander. Zedwick pulled his commander from the burning vehicle and got him to safety. Insurgents began directing small-arms fire on Zedwick as he attempted to retrieve the other soldier's body from the Humvee. Although Zedwick could not free the body before rounds starting cooking off in the flames, he was able to procure weapons and the radio. He ran back through the kill zone, gave first aid to the injured soldier and defended the area until they were medically evacuated. On Feb. 8, 2005, Zedwick became the first Oregon Army National Guard soldier to be awarded the Silver Star Medal since WWII. Like Capt. Amerine (see Hawaii), Zedwick was chosen as one of the faces of the U.S. Army's "America's Army" video game.

RHODE ISLAND



ARMY RESERVE SGT. RYAN GALLUCCI

Then-Spc. Gallucci and his six-member civil affairs team spent almost a year in Iraq helping to rebuild the infrastructure and improve the quality of life for the Iraqis. The team worked and lived in towns near the Iranian border, performing tasks such as getting schools and the municipal governments up and running, and making sure the teachers and workers were on the payroll. Gallucci was responsible for about \$4.7 million in public works projects during his deployment. In a village outside Khanaqin, Gallucci worked with Iraqi contractors to build a water pumping station, three wells, lay nearly \$20,000 worth of pipe, and locate generators to help run the pumping station. The team also built a landfill, and helped get the landfill workers on the payroll. In September 2004, Gallucci was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his efforts.



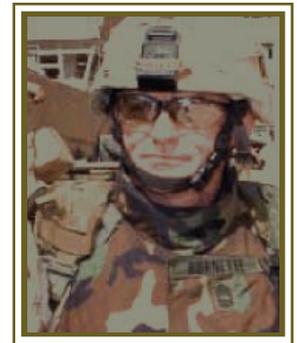
PENNSYLVANIA



ARMY SPECIAL FORCES SGT. 1ST CLASS B. CHARLES GOOD

Then-Staff Sgt. Good and his team were on a mission on Oct. 31, 2003, to halt foreign fighters who were infiltrating Iraq from Syria. Their convoy drove into the enemy-friendly town of Sadah when one of the vehicles was hit by a RPG. Eight members of the team went after the enemy fighters, while Good and two others provided security. A soldier was hit, and Good provided cover fire while the injured soldier was loaded into the vehicle. Good's vehicle was disabled, but he negotiated with an Iraqi man in a run-down Toyota to drive them to the camp. After dropping off the wounded soldier, Good returned to the fight along with other soldiers to assist those still trapped in the village. Good was awarded the Silver Star Medal on Dec. 15, 2004.

SOUTH CAROLINA



ARMY MASTER SGT. RICHARD BURNETTE

On May 1, 2005, Burnette and his group arrived at a densely populated neighborhood in Baghdad and began inspecting the area. A vehicle came roaring down the street and exploded, severely injuring Burnette and killing four children. Used to working 18-hour days watching out for his soldiers, the long recuperation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center was a tough experience for Burnette. But while there, he became an older brother figure to the other wounded soldiers, helping them adjust during their stay there. Burnette has now recovered from most of his injuries, and hopes to stay on active duty. For his service and leadership in Iraq and at Walter Reed, Burnette was named the 2006 Army Times Soldier of the Year. Burnette also has earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart.



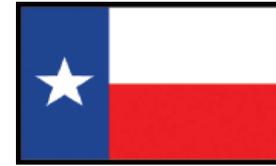
SOUTH DAKOTA



**FORMER ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
CAPT. JOEL ARENDS**

Then-1st Lt. Arends and his team of 30 soldiers operated in and around Baghdad from February 2004 to April 2005. They were responsible for catching a number of terrorists, including one carrying bomb-making materials, jihadist propaganda and large sums of cash. The terrorist claimed to be a professor at a major university in the United States. They also captured one of Saddam Hussein's personal bodyguards. Another time, Arends' team rescued Iraqi civilians from burning vehicles when insurgents attacked a checkpoint near their patrol area. Members of the team rushed into the flames and pulled several Iraqi civilians out of burning vehicles and administered lifesaving medical treatment. For his efforts, Arends was awarded the Bronze Star Medal in March 2005. Arends is now a Captain in the Army Reserve.

TEXAS



**NAVY
PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS JUAN M. RUBIO**

Petty Officer Rubio and his team were patrolling the Euphrates River in Iraq on Jan. 1, 2005, when they were ambushed by insurgents near the Haditha Dam. The enemies detonated an IED, and followed with heavy fire. Rubio was knocked unconscious, but when he came to, he crawled to a wounded Marine and quickly administered medical assistance. He treated two more injured Marines while members of his team were sent back to the boats they had been patrolling in before the attack. After loading the injured, they drove upstream and jumped into Humvees that returned to a battle aid station. Rubio tried to rejoin the battle, but because he had been hit, he was delivered back to the aid station. On April 27, 2006, Rubio received the Silver Star Medal.



TENNESSEE



**AIR FORCE
STAFF SGT. TIMOTHY BISHOP**

Staff Sgt. Bishop planned and controlled 120 close-air support missions in Afghanistan over a 4,600 square kilometer area. During one 48-hour firefight in August 2005, he provided vital support to two Special Forces teams, calling in air strikes on the enemy that ultimately kept those units alive. Operations he supported resulted in the seizure of more than 100,000 enemy munitions. Bishop has trained Special Forces members on close-air support tactics, and developed pre-deployment training programs. For his actions, he received the Bronze Star with Valor. Bishop was named one of the 12 2006 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. While serving in Korea in 2005, he was selected as Pacific Air Forces Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

UTAH



**UTAH ARMY NATIONAL GUARD
CAPT. MATTHEW W. COUSINS**

Then-1st Lt. Cousins and his team were tasked with assisting the Iraq Survey Group (ISG) from May 2003 to March 2004. During that time, they performed at least 70 missions in dangerous war zones in northern Iraq. While protecting the ISG in areas such as Kirkuk, Mosul and Tikrit, Cousins and his team defended convoys of up to 15 vehicles and groups as large as 50 people. They also helped with the investigations, such as mass graves discoveries. Although Cousins' team was sent to high-risk regions in Iraq, they never suffered a casualty or fatality.

Capt. Cousins was awarded the Bronze Star Medal in March 2004.



VERMONT



VERMONT ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SPC. CHRISTOPHER MERCHANT

Merchant arrived in Iraq in October 2005, after volunteering to help Task Force Saber with its mission in the Middle East.

On March 1, 2006, Spc. Merchant was in an observation post near an Iraqi police headquarters in Ramadi, Iraq, when a group of insurgents attacked. The enemies attacked with RPGs, small-arms fire, and two vehicle-borne IEDs. Two of the RPGs hit the up-armored Humvee that Merchant was in, killing him instantly.

Merchant was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, and other service medals on March 1, 2006.



VIRGINIA



NAVY LT. CMDR. BENITO E. BAYLOSIS

Volunteering for a year-long tour in Iraq in July 2005, Lt. Cmdr. Baylosis led a team of electronic engineers and technicians that analyzed 5,500 IEDs. Baylosis personally handled more than 1,000 roadside bomb detonators and provided critical countermeasures. His team studied the electronic circuiting of the enemy's homemade bombs and how they were rigged to explode when Coalition and Iraqi troops were nearby. Baylosis, a leading expert of IED initiators, also developed and examined more than 136 bomb-maker profiles.

For his critical work on IEDs that likely saved numerous Coalition lives, Baylosis received the Bronze Star Medal on Aug. 29, 2006.

WASHINGTON



ARMY MASTER SGT. TRACY L. CUTLER

Master Sgt. Cutler was tasked with helping develop the first Afghan National Army Recruiting Command from March to November 2004. When he arrived in Afghanistan, there were only three national army volunteer centers open, and construction was underway for others. There was no program in place for Afghan recruiters, which meant Cutler, along with two other soldiers, had to start from scratch. They developed and implemented a training plan that is the program used at the Afghan National Army Recruiting Academy. The team finished their task in nine months; the normal time for organizing such a complex, multi-level course is 18 to 24 months. On Oct. 25, 2004, Cutler received the Bronze Star Medal for his work.

WEST VIRGINIA



ARMY SPECIAL FORCES MASTER SGT. DAVID MILES

During the invasion of Baghdad, Master Sgt. Miles and his team were ambushed by enemy fighters at a bridge overpass in southern Baghdad on April 7, 2003. Outnumbered 20-to-1, three members of Miles's group got pinned down under the intense firefight and were unable to escape. Miles organized the recovery mission as the enemies continued to attack. He performed first aid on two of his team members, one of whom would have bled to death without treatment. He was able to carry both of them to safety. In all, Miles killed or directed the killing of up to 20 Saddam loyalists.

For his actions, Miles was awarded the Silver Star Medal on March 10, 2005.



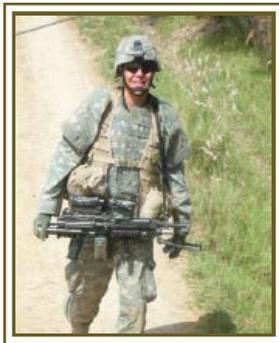
WISCONSIN



AIR FORCE

SENIOR AIRMAN ADAM P. SERVAIS

Senior Airman Servais was in the rocky Uruzgan province in south-central Afghanistan on Aug. 19, 2006, when the convoy he was traveling with came under heavy fire from insurgents. An estimated 100 or more concealed enemies began shooting from three sides. Immediately, Servais turned his Humvee's machine gun toward enemy fire and began shooting. Servais turned over responsibility for the machine gun to another team member and began directing close air support to help suppress the insurgents. As he was talking with pilots overhead and spotting targets for them, a RPG exploded behind Servais, killing him. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal for Valor on Aug. 25, 2006.



WYOMING



ARMY

PFC. JAMES J. ARELLANO

Pfc. Arellano was deployed to Iraq in November 2005 with the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Division.

While on a foot patrol south of Baghdad on Aug. 17, 2006, Arellano encountered insurgents using IED and small-arms fire. Arellano stepped on an IED; the explosion severely injured the soldier. He died from injuries sustained from the blast.

For his work while in Iraq, Arellano was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart and the Combat Infantry Badge on Aug. 30, 2006.

Office of Public Affairs, The Pentagon
OSD Writers Group

